



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



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GOVERNOR

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J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

## *Gus Von Bodungen, former DEQ Assistant Secretary, Dies After Long Illness*

**G**us Von Bodungen, former DEQ Assistant Secretary of the Office of Environmental Services, passed away at Memorial Baptist Hospital in New Orleans on Monday, May 29. He was 68. The cause of death is reported as Cardio-Pulmonary failure. Visitation will be held on Friday, June 2 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Mothe Funeral Home, located at 1300 Vallette Street in Algiers, Louisiana. Visitation will take place on Saturday, June 3 from 7:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. at the Holy Name of Mary Church, 500 Eliza Street in old Algiers. A funeral mass will follow at 11:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the National Kidney Foundation of Louisiana or Masses preferred. Contributions may be left with Ms. Helen Barlow in Room 2012 of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, 7290 Bluebonnet Blvd. in Baton Rouge.



Gus announced his retirement from DEQ earlier this year after 29 years of helping to improve the environmental quality of life in Louisiana.

He received a degree in Chemical Engineering from Louisiana Tech in 1954. As a professional engineer, Gus liked to say, "I've got one of the oldest licenses around." He worked in private industry in Louisiana and spent two years in the United States Army before accepting a position in the Air Quality section as Assistant Chief at the Health Department in 1970. Agency consolidation in 1979 sent him to the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and, eventually, to DEQ when it was organized in 1984.

Gus said that he started working at about the same time the federal government revised the Air Quality Act. The Act required the state to comply with the ambient air standards, which were set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). At the time, Gus said, the standards were being violated across and below Interstate 10 and the state was in violation of the ozone standard wherever it was measured.

The federal government's Clean Air Act was revised several times over the years, and each time the standards became tighter. A workgroup consisting of 32 states was formed to help each state comply with the Act. The Ozone Transport Assessment Group (OTAG) met every month to discuss compliance activities. "The thing that makes me so proud is we were the only state in the 32-state region (that) turned in a complete State Implementation Program (SIP) on time in November of 1994," Gus said. The EPA approved the plan and DEQ is still the only approved state SIP in the 32-state region.

Gus had many success stories from his tenure with the state. Under Gus' leadership, DEQ redesignated more non-attainment areas than any other state and DEQ accumulated a better record than any other

state for issuing Title 5 permits. Gus even received a citation from the governor for redesignating 11 parishes in one day.



**Former Governor Edwin Edwards presents a citation to Gus Von Bodungen for redesignating 11 parishes in a single day into attainment status in accordance with the Clean Air Act .**

His other accomplishments included serving on the Board of Directors for the International Air Waste Management Association and as a member of the Standard Air Monitoring Working Group for the EPA.

Gus attributed his successes to the dedicated and hard working people in his department and state government. He said legislators and governors have always been supportive and helpful.

"The detractors of the Department do not have any real evidence of astounding air pollution," Gus said. "It's unbelievable, the difference. People say we haven't done anything, (that) things are worse. There's no validity to that statement. You can see it in the results in how we've constantly got the ambient air standard down, in every area that we

attacked."

Since 1970, Gus Von Bodungen was consistently in a leadership position. He attributed his success to doing the best job that he could and loving what he did. "The proof of the pudding is how we could get the job done and others couldn't. I enjoyed every minute of it, even when the times were tough," Gus said.

Gus Von Bodungen dedicated his life to protecting the air and the environment. He will be sorely missed.